

MINUTES of the MEETING of the CHAIRS COMMITTEE held via Microsoft Teams on Thursday 01 September 2022

PRESENT:	Donald MacKenzie, Mark Sheridan, Tina Stones & Innis Montgomery
APOLOGIES:	None
CHAIR:	Mark Sheridan
ATTENDING:	Principal Governance Officer
OBSERVER	Dee Bird

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that Dee Bird would be attending this meeting as an observer. Chairs noted that Dee is expected to take on the role of Chair for the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee following Board Approval.

There was one declaration of interests, statement of connection and transparency statement noted:

Tina Stones advised that her role with the Highland Council connected her to colleagues who UHI Inverness were working with in respect of senior phase.

1. MINUTES

The minute of the Meeting of the Committee held on 26 May 2022 was **ACCEPTED** as a correct record and was **APPROVED**.

2. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

- Audit Committee Training – The Governance Officer advised Chairs that this training would form part of the Board Development Plan which will be taken to the Board of Management Meeting on 25 October for approval.
- Staff Resource Panel – The Principal advised Chairs that this was being conducted as part of our effectiveness review with regards the KPI Matrix. Chairs noted that we were assessing our current position in respect of the prospect of flat funding. It was noted that this item would be renamed efficiency review within the actions list.

3. PRINCIPAL UPDATE

The Principal provided Chairs with a verbal update in relation to new and continuing activity and discussions on the following took place:

- Our new conversion strategy in respect of student applications and enrolments, targets, and the expectation that this strategy will be rolled out within the partnership.
- Our continued business engagement including sector reviews with the Principal highlighting models which local businesses are currently using that we could adopt.
- Strategies which we have put in place to assist students who may be suffering from poverty.
- The availability of a hardship fund where staff can apply for assistance and the tax implications from this.
- That our KPI Matrix has been formally adopted by Partnership Council ensuring a standard means of reporting and the collective monitoring of performance.

A lengthy discussion around the resignation of the Vice Chancellor and Principal, UHI took place. Chairs noted that following the second UHI Conference in August there are several actions which are being taken forward.

Chairs were advised that a paper will be circulated to all as part of the Extraordinary Board of Management Meeting scheduled for 13 September 22. This paper will provide members with an explanation of the strategic changes proposed and work streams, which will include financial restructuring, review of curriculum, review of shared services, the establishment of governance across the partnership and promotion of collaboration and equality. Chairs were advised that representatives from the partners would lead each theme.

Chairs noted that the University Court Chair would attend our Extraordinary Board of Management Meeting.

4. CHAIRS UPDATE

Short Life Working Group

The Short Life Working Group Chair provided a background to the group and the work undertaken to carry out all actions in relation to the Halls of Residence. The Short Life Working Group Chair advised that due to a conflict of interest they would be standing down from this role and it was noted that Dee Bird will take over as Chair of the Group going forward. The next stage will be to establish values in respect of the Halls of Residence. Chairs noted that the incoming Chair will be arranging a meeting with the Vice Principal - Operations, Executive Office and will tour the Halls.

Learning, Teaching and Research Committee

The outgoing Chair of the Learning, Teaching and Research Committee advised that all Board Member Evaluations had been conducted. Chairs were advised that representatives from QAA had been invited to attend the meeting on 27 September 22 to provide members with an introductory presentation. Chairs spoke to the difficulties which the previous HISA Inverness President had highlighted, and it was noted that we will continue to monitor this to ensure there are no further difficulties being incurred.

Chairs were advised that an invitation to the Chair of HISA had been extended and it is hoped that they will present to the LT&R Committee in December 22.

Tina Stones left the meeting.

Finance and General Purposes Committee

The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee advised that the Committee had approved, as part of the June Committee, both the revenue and capital budget for the upcoming academic year. Chairs noted that information was slow to be received from SFC and our RSB which had resulted in a delay in these documents being circulated to Committee members. Chairs were advised that the Committee had discussed the implications from flat funding and inflation increases. Chairs noted that an agenda setting meeting is scheduled for 08 September 22. The F&GP Chair noted that evaluations for F&GP Members have not yet been conducted.

Action: Governance Officer to chase up relevant members to request that they complete their paperwork and return it to the F&GP Chair for the next part of the evaluation process.

HR Committee

The Chair of the HR Committee advised that during the recent HR Agenda Setting meeting, discussions on cost of living and pay bargaining had taken place.

Dee Bird left the meeting.

5. UPDATE ON INDUSTRY EVENT

The Principal provided Chairs with an update on the proposed industry event highlighting that this would coincide with our strategic sector reviews. Chairs noted that whilst the event was originally expected to take place in Autumn it was now looking likely that this would be held in the New Year.

Dee Bird joined the meeting.

Chairs welcomed this event which would be relevant to the local area and would allow us to seek feedback on what the industry requires from us.

6. ANNUAL STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW

The Principal spoke to his report which he advised had proved to be an incredibly useful piece of work.

Action: The Annual Strategic Plan Review should be discussed at full Board of Management on 25 October 2022.

Chairs noted that this review had linked the strategic plan to high level actions and the KPI's reflect our culture and ethos.

Chairs noted that several sub-strategies will be taken to Committees and then to Board for consideration and approval.

Chairs welcomed this report and the work which had been undertaken.

7. UPDATE ON MEETING OF UHI PARTNERSHIP CHAIRS AND PRINCIPALS

It was reiterated to Chairs that a paper was expected to be circulated from UHI Executive Office with regards the six principles of travel following discussions at the UHI Conference. Chairs welcomed this positive move forward.

Chairs discussed the Rural and Island Merger Project and noted that it was currently subject to a 10-week public consultation.

Action: It was requested that a Principal from one of the merger colleges be invited to speak to the Board at the December 22 or February 23 meeting to provide additional insight to the merger.

It was noted that we have highlighted our interest in continuing with the Shared Financial Service post-merger. Chairs noted that shared services are also being discussed as part of the principles coming out of the UHI Conference.

Dee Bird left the meeting.

8. GOVERNANCE UPDATE

The Governance Officer spoke to her report highlighting the following:

- That our Review of the Code of Good Governance Questionnaire had now closed. Chairs noted that a full report from this will be taken to the Board of Management in October.
- That Bonnie Crawford had resigned from her role as HISA Representative and that HISA will run an election process in October to fill this and the other vacant role.
- Chairs noted the deadline for completion of all Board Member Evaluations.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 03 November 2022 - 8.30 a.m.

Signed by Chair:



Date: 03 November 2022